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A DRAMATIZATION OF THE BOOK OF JOB

THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN SUFFERING

By JAMES S. STEVENS





DR. GEORGE DAVIS CHASE AS JOB IN PROSPERITY

✓
A DRAMATIZATION
of
THE BOOK OF JOB

The Problem of Human Suffering

By

JAMES S. STEVENS ✓

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University of Maine*



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Two

Characters

In order of their appearance

HERALD

FIRST CRIER

SECOND CRIER

JOB

THE SATAN

THE LORD

FIRST MESSENGER

SECOND MESSENGER

THIRD MESSENGER

FOURTH MESSENGER

JOB'S WIFE

ELIPHAZ, the Temanite

BILDAD, the Shuhite

ZOPHAR, the Naamathite

ELIHU, the Buzite

An oriental pageant, *appearing in the epilog.*

W. E. H. / Aug. 31 / 1917

Synopsis

*This synopsis will be of assistance to the audience if
printed on a program*

The Herald's Confession of Faith
Overture, *I Know That My Redeemer Liveth*

PROLOG

Job's prosperity is announced by the Crier
Job appears
Job's integrity questioned by the Satan
Job's afflictions announced by Messengers
Job's integrity further questioned by the Satan; he is grievously afflicted
Musical theme, Nevin's Song of Sorrow
Job's wife reproves him for retaining his integrity
Arrival of Job's friends
Musical theme, Massenet's Elegy

THE CURSE

Job curses the day he was born

THE DEBATE

Argument between Job and his three friends

THE INTERPOSITION OF ELIHU

Elihu is silenced by a storm which culminates in a whirlwind
Out of the whirlwind speaks the

VOICE OF THE LORD

Job is humbled

THE EPILOG

Job's restored prosperity announced by the Criers, and illustrated by a Pageant

Preface

From a literary point of view it is unfortunate that the Book of Job appears in the Bible. There are many who hesitate to study any portion of the scriptures from a literary or critical standpoint. This is doubtless due to a lingering belief in their literal truthfulness and a feeling that it is sacrilegious to devote any study to the scriptures other than a mere reading of the passages.

On the other hand there seems to exist on the part of many young people a certain reluctance to be known as a student of the Bible. Many college students who would not hesitate to carry a copy of Homer, Aeschylus, or Shakespeare across the campus would be deeply chagrined if they were found with a copy of the Old Testament. It is refreshing, therefore, when one finds on the cover of such a splendid book as Davidson's *Job*, the words "For Schools and Colleges."

Thomas Carlyle has said, "There is nothing written, I think, in the Bible or out of it, of equal literary merit." Any effort which may be made to familiarize young people with such a piece of literature as the Book of Job is worth while. In this dramatization an attempt has been made to retain the passages which are necessary for a connected narrative and omit those which are not essential to the story. Some difficulty was experienced in preserving the homogeneous character of the book after these omissions had been made. A careful reading will, I think, prove that the story is complete and the literary form has not been lost. The production of this dramatization may be undertaken by any church, Sunday-school, young peoples' society, or literary club which contains men and women who are enthusiastic in their admiration for the Book of Job and who are willing to put the requisite work into the preparation. Inasmuch as the music is played behind the scenes it may be suggested that a church or chapel which has an organ behind the pulpit would be well adapted for this production. It is obvious, of course, that its success will depend largely upon the dramatic powers of the members of the cast and the skill of the musicians who play the various selections.

THE BOOK OF JOB

This book was formerly regarded as the oldest book in the Bible and perhaps the oldest piece of literature which we possess. Recent critics are inclined to give it a much later date and it is now generally assigned to about the seventh century B. C. It is certain that the story of the book was laid in very early patriarchal times, and if the book was written at the time indicated it is a wonderful example of a work which is entirely free from anachronisms. No mention is made of the commandments, the priesthood, the ark of the covenant or any of the laws and regulations so fully elaborated in the Pentateuch. It is as though one should write a philosophical dialog which is supposed to have taken place in the twelfth century and which should be entirely free from the influence of Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Berkeley, William James, or Bernard Shaw. Even Shakespeare failed to do this as readers of Julius Caesar will readily recall. Such statements as, "The clock hath stricken three," and "O what a time you have chose out, brave Caius, to wear a kerchief," have reference to events which could not well have happened in Caesar's time.

Mr. John Owen has called the Book of Job one of the five skeptical dramas of history. He includes in this list besides the Book of Job, the *Prometheus Bound*, Goethe's *Faust*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and Calderon's *Wonder Working Magician*. While there is a certain similarity between the Book of Job and the last two mentioned, the problems of the Faust, Prometheus Bound, and Job are strikingly alike. The opening passages of the Faust are based directly on the Book of Job, and Mephistopheles is the Satan considerably modified in character. The most striking resemblance appears between *Prometheus Bound* and *Job*. Their problems are very similar as are the mental perplexities of the heroes of the books. One should read carefully the *Prometheus Bound* in order to gain an intelligent conception of the Book of Job. A passage which is strikingly similar to a passage in *Job* is quoted in the notes.

The authorship of *Job* has been attributed to Job himself, Moses, Solomon, Hezekiah, Baruch, and others. The belief that it is a narrative of historical facts is not entertained by many scholars at the present time. It is quite likely, however, that

there lived in patriarchal times a man who was conspicuous both for his piety and for his prosperity. A sudden series of calamities reduced this man to poverty and physical discomfort. So striking were the changes in his condition that his name became a proverb for many generations, and it is likely that around the legends connected with this personage were built up the scenes which are given us in the *Book of Job*.

THE PROBLEM OF THE BOOK

It is generally accepted that the problem of the Book of Job lies in the endeavor to find out why misfortunes exist in the world, and in particular why they fall to the lot of the righteous. What may be called an auxiliary problem is stated in the prolog where Satan asks the question "Doth Job fear God for nought?" This is equivalent to asking if there exists in the world any such thing as disinterested virtue. The answer to this question is given us in the prolog, and that part of the book seems to be complete in itself. We see that Job fears God for no selfish reason, and continues to fear Him after the most terrible calamities have overtaken him.

The greater problem with which the main portions of the book are chiefly concerned is attacked from various points of view by the different speakers. To Job the misfortunes of the righteous come from an Omnipotent Being who does not always exhibit perfect justice in his dealings with mankind. To the three friends the misfortunes of Job are evidences that his life is not a blameless one and this point of view is shared by Elihu. The philosophy of the epilog is the weakest part of the book and clearly teaches that great material prosperity eventually follows the proper readjustment of a man's relations to God.

It is in the Voice of God speaking out of the whirlwind¹ that we get the most rational explanation of the problem of evil. A complete solution of the difficulty is by no means given us but we are told what the doctrine of evolution many years afterwards confirmed, that man is a part of a stupendous scheme which the Infinite is bringing into perfection. There is no more reason for an individual man to complain of his misfortunes and temptations than for an earthworm to complain because a segment happened to be left out in its creation. Job's attention was called to the Infinite power and wisdom of the Almighty, and when he sees this he says no more about his own misfortunes. He repents in dust and

ashes; and this is not for specific sins which he has committed, but it is because he has failed to have the proper conception of the relation between man and his Maker. This is probably the earliest teaching in existence of the stupendous fact that

“Nothing walks with aimless feet,”

but that if we could in any slight measure get the point of view of the Infinite the problems which perplex us now would become perfectly clear.

Stage, Scenes, and Costumes

STAGE

The stage settings should be arranged to suggest an oriental country place in patriarchal times. A dark curtain should hang at the sides and back except in the center of the stage there should be a thin blue curtain through which light from behind could readily pass. In front of this blue curtain should be a grotto with a well at the right. At the extreme right of the stage should be an open tent from which Job's wife first appears and into which the messengers go after they have recited their lines. At the left of the grotto, steps should lead to the upper part of the center of the stage and terminate behind the blue curtain. It is by means of these steps that Satan passes from earth to heaven and back to earth again. Heaven is represented in the rear of the brilliantly lighted blue curtain. The steps may also be used by the Herald when during the pageant scene he carries up his incense.

SCENES

There is no necessity for changing the scenery at any time during the play, nor is it necessary to have a drop curtain. The music is played in each case behind the scenes and the action of Job when in expressing his great sorrow he throws off his mantle and puts on his emblem of mourning, may be effectively represented before the audience. The pageant which enters from the left and crosses the stage, salutes Job who is in the center of the stage, and passes off at the right.

COSTUMES

Herald: The costume of an oriental shepherd, gray mantle and tunic. He carries a crook.

Criers: Loose flowing black robes and black head covering.

Satan: Close fitting red tights; heavy black mantle; a black or red cap.

Job: Royal purple tunic with white girdle; gold colored mantle with white turban. The mantle and turban are removed and replaced by a sackcloth mantle.

Job's Wife: Lavender tunic and white mantle; thin white veil.

Messengers: Short tunics in various colors.

The Friends: Neutral colored tunics and mantles; white turbans.

Elihu: Short light blue tunic and gray mantle.

Pageant: The women wear white tunics and mantles; the men wear various colored tunics and mantles.

All the cast wear sandals. The one who speaks the words of the Voice of the Lord is always behind the scenes.

MUSIC

Where this dramatization has been given a great part of the success has been due to the music. An ideal arrangement would include an organ, cello, and violin. The piano may be readily substituted for the organ and either the cello or violin may be omitted if necessary. There are two passages in the Book of Job which have been used as themes for musical compositions. The first, "I know that My Redeemer Liveth," is one of the striking pronouncements of the book, and the tune "Bradford" which is usually used with these words readily lends itself as an overture which will serve to produce in the audience a reverent and receptive attitude. Variations of this tune should also be played as an accompaniment when the Voice of the Lord is speaking in the whirlwind. The other passage "Oh, that I Knew where I Might Find Him" is made use of in the oratorio of Elijah. This may be used to good advantage when Job has finished his "Oath of Clearing," just before the Crier announces "The words of Job are ended."

When Job is smitten with disease and sinks upon a refuse heap in great affliction a musical selection representing profound sorrow should be played. While one should consult his individual judgment in making these selections, it has been found that Nevin's "Song of Sorrow" is admirable here. A little later when Job's three friends come to condole with him they sit in silence for seven days and seven nights. Massenet's wonderful elegy, with organ, violin, and cello would seem to be a most appropriate selection to express this exhibition of sympathetic silence.

The greatest difficulty will probably be found in producing the music of the storm when Elihu is speaking. The text indicates the various phases of the storm which should be imitated. It would add to the effect if the lights were turned off at this time and electric flashes should appear behind the blue curtain when lightning is suggested.

Pronunciations

Barachel	Ba'-rak-el
Buzite	Buz'-ite
Chaldeans	Kal-de'-ans
Elihu	E-li'-hu
Eliphaz	El'-i-phaz
Mazzaroth	Maz'-za-roth
Naamathite	Na''-a-ma-thite'
Orion	O-ri'-on
Pleiades	Ple'-a-des
Sabeans	Sa-be'-ans
Temanite	Te'-man-ite
Zophar	Zo'-phar

The Drama

HERALD

The Herald is dressed as an oriental shepherd. He carries a crook and enters slowly. When he reaches the center of the stage he recites:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

The Herald goes off stage when the overture begins.

OVERTURE

"I Know that My Redeemer Liveth"

PROLOG

FIRST CRIER, *enters left.*

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one

his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, "It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus did Job continually.

SECOND CRIER, *enters right.*

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.

Job appears in front. He washes his hands and assumes an attitude of devotion. Satan appears in the rear, observes Job, and ascends to heaven.

MUSIC IN HEAVEN

This should be rendered by a mixed quartet or chorus choir without accompaniment.

Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
Which wert and art and evermore shall be.

Holy, holy, holy! though the darkness hide thee,
Though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see;
Only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,
Perfect in power, in love and purity.

Heaven should be illuminated just as the music begins.

THE LORD, *in heaven.*

Whence comest thou?

SATAN, *in heaven.*

From going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it.

THE LORD

Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

SATAN

Doth Job fear God for nought?

Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath and he will curse thee to thy face.

THE LORD

Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand.

Satan leaves heaven and comes to the earth, rear of stage. He glances at Job who is in front and hastens off the stage.

FIRST MESSENGER, *enters left, to Job.*

The oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them.

And the Sabceans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

SECOND MESSENGER, *enters left, to Job.*

The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

THIRD MESSENGER, *enters left, to Job.*

The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

FOURTH MESSENGER, *enters left, to Job.*

Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house;

And, behold there came a great wind from the wilderness and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

These messengers speak hurriedly and break in upon one another. When they have delivered their messages they pass to the right of the stage and sit down on the floor under the tent. Job receives their messages with increasing sorrowfulness. When they have departed he rises, rends his mantle, throws dust upon his head, falls down upon the ground, and says:

Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

FIRST CRIER, *enters left.*

In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

SECOND CRIER, *enters right.*

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord.

While the Second Crier is speaking Satan appears at the rear of the stage and ascends to heaven.

THE LORD

From whence comest thou?

SATAN

From going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it.

THE LORD

Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him to destroy him without cause.

SATAN

Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

THE LORD

Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

Satan comes down out of heaven and sees Job walking sorrowfully upon earth. He pierces him with his glance and casts a spell upon him. Job feels the blight of Satan and sinks down upon the ground in terrible agony.

Music, *The Song of Sorrow*, by Nevin

JOB'S WIFE, *enters right.*

* Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die.

JOB

Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?

Job's wife passes off the stage slowly and somewhat scornfully to the right. When she reaches the messengers she claps her hands and they rise and hurry away.

Job seats himself upon a refuse heap. A company of visitors approach from a distance, left. Of these, three come closer to Job and sit down in silence.

Music: Massenet's *Elegy*. *The music should continue at length to represent an extended period of time.*

JOB

Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, there is a man child conceived.

Let that day be darkness, let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.

Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; let it look for

light, but have none; neither let it see the dawning of the day:

Sorrowfully.

Why died I not from the womb?

Why did the knees prevent me?

For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept; then had I been at rest.

Where the wicked cease from troubling; and where the weary are at rest.

There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.

The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master.

ELIPHAZ

If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? but who can withhold himself from speaking?

Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands.

Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees.

But now it is come upon *thee*, and thou faintest; it toucheth *thee*, and thou art troubled.

Remember, I pray thee, whoever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?

With awe.

A thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.

In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men.

Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake.

Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up:

It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes, there was silence and I heard a voice, saying,

Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his Maker?

Eliphaz relates his vision in a manner to inspire great awe. His manner of speaking now changes somewhat abruptly to simple narrative.

I have seen the foolish taking root; but suddenly I cursed his habitation.

His children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them.

Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground;

Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.

I would seek unto *God*, and unto *God* would I commit my cause.

JOB

Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together!

For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea; therefore my words are swallowed up.

For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit; the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.

Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass? or loweth the ox over his fodder?

What is my strength, that I should hope? and what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?

Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of a hireling?

As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as a hireling looketh for the reward of his work;

So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.

When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.

My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.

O remember that my life is wind; mine eye shall no more see good.

The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more; thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.

As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.

He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.

BILDAD

How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?

Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?

If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty.

If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers;

Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.

JOB

I know it is so of a truth; but how should man be just with God?

If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.

Who hath hardened himself against God, and hath prospered?

Which removeth the mountains, and they know not; which overturneth them in his anger:

Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble;

Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the stars:

Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea;

Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south;

Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.

If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean;

Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.

For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.

Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

My soul is weary of life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

Are not my days few? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.

Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and shadow of death;

A land of darkness as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.

ZOPHAR

Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified?

Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?

For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.

But oh that God would speak, and open his lips against thee;

And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is! Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth.

Impressively.

Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?

If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let no wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.

And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid; yea, many shall make suit unto thee.

But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

JOB

No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.

But I have understanding as well as you, yea, who knoweth not such things as these?

I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him; the just upright man is laughed to scorn.

Vehemently.

But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value.

Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what will.

Behold He may slay me; I may not hope; but I will maintain my ways to his face.

Job's mood becomes contemplative.

Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.

He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.

Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;

Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

But man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up:

So man lieth down, and riseth not; till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

ELIPHAZ

Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind?

Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?

Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou made before the hills?

What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?

The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days, and the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.

For he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.

JOB

I have heard many such things, miserable comforters are ye all.

Shall vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?

I should also speak as ye do; if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake my head at you.

But I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief.

Though I speak, my grief is not assuaged, and though I forbear, what am I eased?

My face is foul with weeping, and on my eyelids is the shadow of death;

Not for any injustice in mine hands; also my prayer is pure.

Oh that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbor!

When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.

But as for you all, do ye return, and come now: for I cannot find one wise man among you.

If I wait, the grave is mine house; I have made my bed in the darkness.

I have said to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister.

And where is now my hope? As for my hope, who shall see it?

They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust.

BILDAD

How long will it be ere ye make an end of words? Mark, and afterwards we will speak.

Wherefore are we counted as beasts, and reputed vile in your sight?

Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine.

The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle drive him to his feet.

His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off.

They that come after him shall be astonished at his day, as they that went before were affrighted.

Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.

JOB

How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?

These ten times have ye reproached me: ye are not ashamed that ye make yourselves strange to me.

And be it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with myself.

Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.

Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?

Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!

That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever!

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

ZOPHAR

Knowest thou not this of old since man was placed upon earth.

That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?

Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds:

Yet he shall perish for ever like his own offal; they which have seen him shall say, Where is he?

He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found; yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night.

All darkness shall he hide in his secret places, a fire not blown shall consume him; it shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle.

This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God.

JOB

Hear diligently my speech, and let this be your consolations.

Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken mock on.

Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?

Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes.

Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.

They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.

They take the timbrel and harp and rejoice at the sound of the organ.

They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.

Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.

What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?

Shall any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.

One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet.

And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.

They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them.

How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?

ELIPHAZ

Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?

Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous?
or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?

Is not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite?

For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought,
and stripped the naked of their clothing.

Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou
hast withholden bread from the hungry.

Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the
fatherless have been broken.

Therefore snares are round about thee, and sudden fear
troubleth thee;

Or darkness, that thou canst not see; and abundance of
waters cover thee.

If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou
shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.

Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir
as the stones of the brooks.

Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have
plenty of silver.

For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty and
shalt lift up thy face unto God.

*Eliphaz should make the list of specific charges count
strongly against Job.*

JOB, yearningly.

Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come
even to his seat!

I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with
arguments.

I would know the words which he would answer me, and
understand what he would say unto me.

Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he
would put strength in me.

For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and
many such things are with him.

Therefore am I troubled at his presence; when I consider,
I am afraid of him.

For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth
me:

Because I was not cut off before the darkness, neither hath
he covered the darkness from my face.

BILDAD, *with little of his former vigor.*

Dominion and fear are with him; he maketh peace in his places.

Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise?

How then can men be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of woman?

Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.

How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?

Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.

He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.

He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them.

He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it.

He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end.

The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof.

He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud.

By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.

Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?

JOB

As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, who hath vexed my soul;

All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils.

My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.

God forbid that I should justify you; till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.

My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.

ZOPHAR

What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained when God taketh away his soul?

Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?

Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God?

I will teach you by the hand of God; that which is with the Almighty will I not conceal.

Behold, all ye yourselves have seen it; why then are ye thus altogether vain?

This is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of the oppressors, which they shall receive of the Almighty.

If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword; and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.

Those that remain of him shall be buried in death; and his widows shall not weep.

Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay:

He may prepare it, but the just shall put it on and the innocent shall divide the silver

[He buildeth his house as a moth, and as a booth that the keeper maketh.

The rich man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered; he openeth his eyes, and he is not.

Terrors take hold on him as waters, a tempest stealeth him away in the night.

The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth; and as a storm hurleth him out of his place.

For God shall cast upon him, and not spare: he would fain flee out of his hand.

Man shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place.]

Zophar changes his tone from assertion to meditation.

Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place for gold where they fine it.

Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stone.

He setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out all perfection; the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death.

The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; even the waters

forgotten of the foot; they are dried up, they are gone away from men.

As for the earth, out of it cometh bread; and under it is turned up as it were fire.

The stones of it are the place of sapphires: and it hath dust of gold.

There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen:

The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it

[He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots.

He cutteth out rivers among the rock; and his eye seeth every precious thing.

He bindeth the floods from overflowing; and the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.]

But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?

Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living.

The depth saith, It is not in me; and the sea saith, It is not with me.

It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.

It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or with the sapphire.

The gold and the crystal cannot equal it; and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold.

No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies.

The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold.

Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?

Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air.

Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.

God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.

For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven.

To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure.

When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder:

Then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.

And unto man, he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.

JOB

He rises and pronounces impressively the oath of clearing.

If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hastened to deceit:

If my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands:

If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me:

If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail:

If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering:

If his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep;

If I have lifted up my hands against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate:

Then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone.

If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence:

If I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much:

If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness;

And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand:

[If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him;

If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied.

If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom.]

If my land cry against me, or that the furrows likewise thereof complain;

If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money, or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life:

Let thistles grow instead of wheat and cockle instead of barley.

Variations of the theme, "*Oh, that I Knew where I Might Find Him,*" from Elijah.

FIRST CRIER, *enters left.*

The words of Job are ended.

SECOND CRIER

So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God.

Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

Elihu comes into the inner circle in a hesitating manner.

ELIHU

I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not show you mine opinion.

I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.

But there is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

Great men are not always wise; neither do the aged understand judgment.

Therefore I said, Hearken to me; I also will shew mine opinion.

Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out what to say.

Yea, I attended unto you, and behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words:

Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man.

Addressing Job.

If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up.

Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead; I also am formed out of the clay.

Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.

Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters.

For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not.

In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed;

Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction.

Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I will speak

If thou hast anything to say answer me; speak, for I desire to justify thee.

If not, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.

Job remains silent; Elihu addresses the friends.

Hear my words, O ye wise men; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.

For the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.

Let us choose to us judgment; let us know among ourselves what is good.

If now thou hast understanding, hear this; hearken to the voice of my words.

Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.

Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom.

My desire is that Job may be tried unto the end, because of his answers for wicked men.

Suffer me a little and I will shew thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf.

I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.

For truly my words shall not be false; he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.

Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any; he is mighty in strength and wisdom.

He preserveth not the life of the wicked; but giveth right to the poor.

Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of years be searched out.

For he maketh small the drops of water; they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof: (*Rain*)

Which the clouds do drop and distill upon man abundantly.

Also can any understand the spreadings of the clouds, or the noise of his tabernacle?

Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the sea.

Rain.

Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the sound that goeth out of his mouth.

He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning unto the ends of the earth. (*Lightning*)

After it a voice roareth; he thundereth with the voice of his excellency; and he will not stay them when his voice is heard.

Thunder.

God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.

Out of the south cometh the whirlwind; and cold out of the north.

Loud Wind.

By the breath of God frost is given; and the breadth of the waters is straitened.

Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud; he scattereth his bright cloud:

And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds; but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.

Fair weather cometh out of the north; with God is terrible majesty.

Fair Weather.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out; it is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice; he will not afflict.

Increasing Storm.

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

Culmination of storm into a whirlwind, Elihu recites the last of the passage brokenly and in evident terror. The music reaches a climax and stops suddenly.

THE LORD

Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? *Elihu slinks away.*

Addressing Job.

Gird up thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

While the Lord is speaking soft music from "I Know that My Redeemer Liveth" should be played.

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or, who laid the corner stone thereof?

When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?

When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it,

And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors.

And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days: and caused the dayspring to know his place:

Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?

Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?

Canst thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?

Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?

Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?

Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils is terrible.

He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength; he goeth on to meet the armed men.

He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword.

The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield.

He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage; neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet.

He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha! and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

JOB

Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.

Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.

THE LORD

Gird up thy loins like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?

Canst thou draw out leviathan with a hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down?

Canst thou put a hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?

Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft words unto thee?

None is so fierce that dare stir him up: who then is able to stand before me?

JOB

I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

THE LORD

Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?

JOB

I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak.

THE LORD, *faintly*.

I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

JOB

I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee:

Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

FIRST CRIER, *enters left*.

And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job hath.

Therefore, take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I

accept; lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.

So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the Lord commanded them; the Lord also accepted Job.

And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.

At this point a pageant representing Job's brethren and friends passes before him and makes obeisance. Job's wife, one of the pageant, covers Job with the gold colored mantle which he had discarded. The Herald slowly ascends the steps towards heaven bearing a vessel of smoking incense.

Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house; and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.

So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.

He had also seven sons and three daughters.

And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.

After this lived Job a hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.

So Job died, being old and full of days.

The End

Notes

THE SATAN

The character of Satan as interpreted by modern biblical scholars differs radically from that of the evil spirit of the Persians or the personal Devil of the Middle Ages. He is supposed to be one of the sons of God whose particular mission is to test the characters of men and women upon the earth in order to discover whether there may not exist certain hidden blemishes. For dramatic purposes, however, it is better to consider Satan to possess a spirit of distrust of mankind amounting almost to contempt. His lines should be repeated with sneering insinuation. In this respect the character should not differ materially from Mephistopheles in the Faust.

JOB'S WIFE

Job's wife speaks but one line but this line contains dramatic possibilities of a high order. Her words represent the only real temptation that comes to Job outside of his inner consciousness, unless we regard the discourses of the three friends as containing a temptation to give an explanation of Job's afflictions which he does not honestly entertain.

ELIPHAZ

Eliphaz is the oldest, wisest, and most courteous of the three friends. His first speech should be spoken with great calmness and dignity. He is fully persuaded that the sufferings of the world result from sins which have been committed. He is something of a mystic and defends his position in his speech by reciting an account of a vision which he has had sometime in his past life. Great pains should be taken to repeat these lines in a manner to inspire awe on the part of the listeners.

BILDAD

Bildad is younger and less courteous than Eliphaz. He agrees with him, however, as does Zophar also, in attributing Job's sufferings to iniquities of which he has been guilty. Bildad

is a traditionalist and bases much of his argument upon the fact that the fathers held the opinion that he is expressing.

ZOPHAR

Zophar is the most practical and worldly-wise of the three friends. He has a scheme of human activity which is very simple. If Job would put away his evil he would surely receive great prosperity and undimmed happiness for the remainder of his days. Zophar is impetuous and resents any expression of opinion which does not coincide with his own. His words did more to stir up Job to anger than any which had been spoken before.

TRANSLATION

The Authorized Version is followed throughout on account of its great beauty and dignity. The oft quoted expression of trust, Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him, has been changed in the text because the translation given is thought to be a better one, and because it certainly better fits in with Job's particular frame of mind at this time.

PROMETHEUS VINCTUS

If one desires to get as true an insight as possible into Job's mental attitude it is suggested that the Prometheus Bound by Aeschylus be read. There are many passages where Prometheus expresses sentiments similar to those uttered by Job. Compare the following with Job XVI — 4:

'Tis easy for the man whose foot is placed
Outside calamities, to urge advice
On him who struggles in their toils.

BILDAD'S PICTURE OF A WICKED MAN

It is not difficult to see that Bildad is painting a striking picture of a wicked man and depicting the calamities which shall surely befall him. It is an easy inference that he has Job in mind in all this and this idea should govern the reading of the lines.

ZOPHAR'S PICTURE

Zophar repeats the line of argument used by Bildad and makes it just as obvious that he is referring to Job.

ELIPHAZ'S SPECIFIC CHARGES

Eliphaz who began his round of speeches with a courteous exaltation to repentance and followed this in his second speech with a picture of the fate which follows the wicked man, here charges Job with specific sins which he has committed. His natural kindly temperament causes him at the end of his catalog of sins to hold up to Job the promise that if he will return to the Almighty he shall lay up gold as dust and have plenty of silver. This idea of a personal reward represented the highest ethical conception of the three friends.

BILDAD'S LAST SPEECH AND THE MISSING SPEECH
OF ZOPHAR

The last speech of Bildad in the authorized version is a very pointless one. Many consider that this speech and the fact that Zophar failed to reply the third time indicate a confession of defeat on the part of the Friends. There are others who believe that by some disarrangement of the manuscript part of the speech uttered by Job should have been given to Zophar. It is a fact that the sentiments expressed in this speech are at variance with those expressed by Job in his former utterances. Whereas he had steadfastly maintained that it was not uncommon to observe the prosperity of the wicked, he now comes out in direct opposition to this doctrine and tells us that there is no prosperity for one who transgresses the laws of God. Without entering into the merits of the case it seems best for dramatic purposes to follow the arrangement used by Professor Richard G. Moulton, of the University of Chicago, and extend Bildad's last speech by using material attributed to Job, and to give to Zophar the lines which deal with the punishment of the wicked and the chapter on wisdom, which would be much more appropriate for Zophar than for Job in this place.

ELIHU

Elihu should be in strong contrast to the three Friends and should show both by his manner and costume that he is a youth. The fact that he takes over fifty verses to apologize for his speaking at all gives a clue to his character. His point of view differs but little from that of the Friends, but as he proceeds he develops a sort of self-assertiveness which is striking. He appeals for

recognition in turn to Job and the Friends, and when these fail to recognise him he turns to the heavens which seem to answer him by a series of meteorological manifestations which strike terror into his heart. Although the narrative does not make it clear that the storm which Elihu describes actually culminates in the whirlwind out of which the Voice of God speaks, yet it is very natural so to regard it, and for dramatic purposes the piano accompaniment should express the various phases of the storm as recited by Elihu.

THE STORM CULMINATES: THE VOICE OUT OF THE WHIRLWIND

When the storm has culminated into a whirlwind Elihu should express the profoundest terror and the music should stop abruptly. The first question asked by the Lord out of the whirlwind is addressed to Elihu. Then the Voice turns to Job and beginning with the series of question which are asked Job, a soft musical accompaniment should be played based on "*I Know that My Redeemer Liveth.*"

THE LENGTH OF THE PLAY

To give the play in the form in which it appears in this book requires about one and three-quarters hours. If the audience is made up of those who are interested in the discussions and are able to follow the various phases of thought from beginning to end it is preferable to produce the play in full. If, however, the audience is made up quite largely of people to whom the long discussions do not so favorably appeal, it may be well to cut down the argumentative portions to some extent. There are certain sections which are enclosed in square brackets which may be eliminated if it is thought best. This would probably save about fifteen minutes in the time of presentation.



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